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DRAMATIZATION  
OF  
TENNYSON'S  
"PRINCESS."

BY  
GRACE C. BELL.



# DRAMATIZATION

OF

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## TENNYSON'S "PRINCESS."

BY

GRACE C. BELL,

TEACHER OF ELOCUTION AND PHYSICAL CULTURE.

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THE dramatization of "The Princess" was found to be a necessity. Many pupils read the poem, not very carefully, probably, and found little in it to interest them.

The arrangement of it as a dialogue awakened a new interest.

This dramatization is intended not only for *reading* in classes, but to be *performed* by the pupils. Six scenes are sufficient for an evening's entertainment, and for this reason much that might have been introduced for reading has been omitted, and only those scenes necessary for a proper conception of the poem have been used.

The entire poem should be read and re-read in connection with the dramatization.

G. C. B.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PRINCESS IDA, daughter of King Gama, the Southern Monarch.

LADY PYSCHÉ, } her assistants.  
LADY BLANCHE, }

MELISSA, Lady Blanche's daughter.

THE PRINCE, son of the Northern Monarch.

FLORIAN, } his friends.  
CYRIL, }

MESSENGER.

PUPILS.

DRAMATIZATION  
OF  
TENNYSON'S "PRINCESS."

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SCENE I.—*A room in a hostelry.*

*Enter the PRINCE, FLORIAN, and CYRIL.*

*Cyril.* Most curious am I to hear your story.

*Florian.* I must confess I'm curious, too.

*Prince.* Well, then, I'll tell it you.

While life was yet in bud and blade, betroth'd was I  
To one, a neighboring Princess.

From time to time  
Came murmurs of her beauty from the South,  
And still I wore her picture by my heart,  
And one dark tress; and all around them both  
Sweet thoughts would swarm as bees about their  
queen.

But when the days drew nigh that I should wed,  
My father sent ambassadors with furs  
And jewels, gifts, to fetch her: these brought back  
A present, a great labor of the loom;  
And therewithal an answer vague as wind:  
Besides, they saw the king; he took the gifts;  
He said there was a compact; that was true:

But then she had a will; was he to blame?  
 And maiden fancies; loved to live alone  
 Among her women; certain, would not wed.  
 He said, there were widows with her,  
 Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady Blanche;  
 They fed her theories, in and out of place,  
 Maintaining that with equal husbandry  
 The woman were an equal to the man.  
 At last she begg'd a boon,—  
 A certain summer-palace which he had;  
 He, being an easy man, gave it: and there,  
 All wild, to found an University  
 For maidens, on the spur she fled; and more  
 They know not,—only this: they see no men,  
 Not ev'n her brother Arac, nor the twins  
 Her brethren, tho' they love her, look upon her  
 As on a kind of paragon.

Now, while they spake, I saw my father's face  
 Grow long and troubled like a rising moon,  
 Inflamed with wrath: he started on his feet,  
 Tore the king's letter, snow'd it down, and rent  
 The wonder of the loom thro' warp and woof  
 From skirt to skirt; and at the last he sware  
 That he would send a hundred thousand men,  
 And bring her in a whirlwind.

At last I spoke. "My father, let me go;  
 It cannot be but some gross error lies  
 In this report, this answer of a king  
 Whom all men rate as kind and hospitable:  
 Or, maybe, I myself, my bride once seen,  
 Whate'er my grief to find her less than fame,  
 May rue the bargain made."



"No!"

Roar'd my father, "you shall not; we ourself  
Will crush her pretty maiden fancies dead  
In iron gauntlets."

Still, I am determined to see this haughty princess.

*Florian.* I have a sister at the foreign court,  
Who moves about the Princess; she, you know,  
Who wedded with a nobleman from thence:  
He, dying lately, left her, as I hear,  
The lady of three castles in that land:  
Thro' her this matter might be sifted clean.

*Prince.* So far, good.

*Cyril.* Take me with you, too;  
I'll serve you better in a strait;  
I grate on rusty hinges here.

*Prince.* A thought has just flashed through me.  
Do you remember how we three  
Presented Maid and Nymph and Goddess  
At a feast in my father's court?

*Florian* [*laughing*]. Indeed I do.

*Cyril.* And well the toggery became us.  
You, Prince, were a maiden fair to see.

*Prince.* Why can we not, disguised as maidens,  
Enter this dreadful University,  
Since none but maidens are admitted there?

*Cyril.* The very thing!

*Florian.* I'm ready to don a maiden's gown.

*Prince.* Come, let us get some one to fetch the gear.

[*Exeunt, in great glee.*]

SCENE II.—*A room in the University.*

*The PRINCESS is seated at a table, dictating to the LADY BLANCHE, who writes in a ponderous volume.*

*Enter attendant with a letter, which she gives to the PRINCESS.*

*Princess [reads].* "Three ladies of the Northern empire  
                                 pray  
 Your Highness would enroll them with your own,  
 As Lady Pysche's pupils."

*[To attendant.]* Bid them enter.

*Enter PRINCE, FLORIAN, and CYRIL, disguised as maidens.*

We give you welcome: not without redound  
 Of use and glory to yourself ye come,  
 The first-fruits of the stranger: aftertime,  
 And that full voice which circles round the grave,  
 Will rank you nobly, mingled up with me.  
 What! are the ladies of your land so tall?

*Cyril.* We of the Court.

*Princess.*

From the Court?

Then ye know the Prince?

*Cyril.* The climax of his age! as tho' there were  
 One rose in all the world, your Highness that,  
 He worships your ideal.

*Princess.* We scarcely thought in our own hall to  
                                 hear

This barren verbiage, current among men,  
 Light coin, the tinsel clink of compliment.  
 Your flight from out your bookless wilds would seem  
 As arguing love of knowledge and of power;

Your language proves you still the child. Indeed,  
We dream not of him : when we set our hand  
To this great work, we purposed with ourself  
Never to wed. You likewise will do well,  
Ladies, in entering here, to cast and fling  
The tricks, which make us toys of men, that so,  
Some future time, if so indeed you will,  
You may with those self-styled our lords ally  
Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale with scale.  
Lady Blanche, will you the statutes read ?

*Lady Blanche [reads].* " I promise,  
Not for three years to correspond with home ;  
Not for three years to cross the liberties ;  
Not for three years to speak with any men."

*[The new pupils sign their names.]*

*Princess.* Now ye are green wood : see ye warp not.

O lift your natures up :

Embrace our aims : work out your freedom. Girls,  
Knowledge is now no more a fountain seal'd :  
Drink deep, until the habits of the slave,  
The sins of emptiness, gossip and spite  
And slander, die. Better not be at all  
Than not be noble.

To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue  
The fresh arrivals of the week before ;  
For they press in from all the provinces,  
And fill the hive.

*[Dismisses them.]*

SCENE III.—LADY PSYCHE'S *class-room* ; *pupils assembled*. PRINCE, FLORIAN, and CYRIL *seated together*.

*Florian* [*whispering*]. My sister!

*Cyril*. Comely, too, by all that's fair.

*Prince*. O hush, hush!

[LADY PSYCHE *delivers her lecture*.

*Lady Psyche*. This world was once a fluid haze of light,

Till toward the centre set the starry tides,  
And eddied into suns, that wheeling cast  
The planets: then the monster, then the man;  
Tattoo'd or woaded, winter-clad in skins,  
Raw from the prime, and crushing down his mate;  
As yet we find in barbarous isles, and here  
Among the lowest.

Deep, indeed,  
Our debt of thanks to her who first dared  
To leap the rotten pales of prejudice,  
Disyoke our necks from custom, and assert  
None lordlier than ourselves but that which made  
Woman and man. She has founded; we must build.  
Here may you learn whatever men are taught.

Some say our heads are less—  
Some men's are small; not they the least of men,  
For often fineness compensates for size:  
Besides, the brain is like the hand, and grows  
With using; hence the man's, if more is more;  
He takes advantage of his strength to be  
First in the field: some ages have been lost;  
But woman ripens earlier, and her life  
Is longer.

In the future there will be, everywhere,  
Two heads in council, two beside the hearth,  
Two in the tangled business of the world,  
Two in the liberal offices of life,  
Two plummets dropt for one to sound the abyss  
Of science, and the secrets of the mind :  
Musician, painter, sculptor, critic, more :  
And everywhere the broad and bounteous Earth  
Shall bear a double growth of those rare souls,  
Poets, whose thoughts enrich the blood of the world.

*[The pupils sing.*

Sweet and low, sweet and low,  
Wind of the western sea,  
Low, low, breathe and blow,  
Wind of the western sea !  
Over the rolling waters go,  
Come from the dying moon, and blow,  
Blow him again to me ;  
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,  
Father will come to thee soon ;  
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
Father will come to thee soon ;  
Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
Silver sails all out of the west  
Under the silver moon :  
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

*[Pupils pass out at close of the song. The  
Prince, Florian, and Cyril remain.*

*Lady Psyche.* My brother !

*Florian.* Well, my sister ?

*Lady Psyche.* What do you here ? and in this  
dress ? and these ?

Why, who are these ? a wolf within the fold !  
 A pack of wolves ! the Lord be gracious to me !  
 A plot, a plot, a plot, to ruin all !

*Florian.* No plot ! no plot !

*Lady Psyche.* Wretched boy,  
 How saw you not the inscription on the gate,—  
 LET NO MAN ENTER IN ON PAIN OF DEATH ?

*Florian.* And if I had, who could think  
 The softer Adams of your Academe,  
 O sister, Sirens tho' they be, were such  
 As chanted on the blanching bones of men ?

*Lady Psyche.* But you will find it otherwise.  
 You jest : ill jesting with edge-tools ! my vow  
 Binds me to speak, and O that iron will,  
 That axelike edge unturnable, our Head,  
 The Princess.

*Florian.* Well then, Psyche, take my life,  
 And nail me like a weasel on a grange  
 For warning : bury me beside the gate,  
 And cut this epitaph above my bones :  
*Here lies a brother by a sister slain,  
 All for the common good of womankind.*

*Cyril.* Let me die too, having seen  
 And heard the Lady Psyche.

*Prince.* Albeit so mask'd, madam, I love the truth ;  
 Receive it ; and in me behold the Prince  
 Your countryman, affianced years ago  
 To the Lady Ida : here, for here she was,  
 And thus (what other way was left ?) I came.

*Lady Psyche.* O sir, O Prince, I have no country ;  
                   none ;  
 If any, this ; but none.    Whate'er I was,

Disrooted, what I am is grafted here.  
Affianced, sir? love-whispers may not breathe  
Within this vestal limit; and how should I,  
Who am not mine, say, live: the thunderbolt  
Hangs silent; but prepare: I speak; it falls.

*Prince.* Yet pause; for that inscription there  
I think no more of deadly lurks therein,  
Than in a clapper clapping in a garth,  
To scare the fowl from fruit: if more there be,  
If more and acted on, what follows? war;  
Your own work marr'd: for this your Academe,  
Whichever side be victor, in the halloo  
Will topple to the trumpet down, and pass  
With all fair theories only made to gild  
A stormless summer.

*Lady Psyche.* Let the Princess judge of that.  
Farewell, sir,—and to you.

I shudder at the sequel, but I go.

[*She turns back suddenly.*

O hard, when love and duty clash! A little will I  
yield.

Best so, perchance, for us, and well for you, I fear  
My conscience will not count me fleckless; yet—  
Hear my conditions: promise (otherwise  
You perish) as you came, to slip away,  
To-day, to-morrow, soon: it shall be said,  
These women were too barbarous, would not learn;  
They fled, who might have shamed us: promise, all.

[*They promise. Lady Psyche then turns to  
Florian and takes his hands.*

I knew you at the first: tho' you have grown,  
You scarce have altered: I am sad and glad

To see you, Florian. I give thee to death,  
 My brother! it was duty spoke, not I.  
 My needful seeming harshness, pardon it.  
 Our mother, is she well?

MELISSA *enters*.

*Melissa*. I brought a message here from Lady  
 Blanche.

*Lady Psyche* [*starting*]. Ah, Melissa—you!  
 You heard us?

*Melissa*. O pardon me!  
 I heard, I could not help it, did not wish:  
 But, dearest lady, pray you fear me not,  
 Nor think I bear that heart within my breast,  
 To give three gallant gentlemen to death.

*Lady Psyche*. I trust you, for we two  
 Were always friends, none closer, elm and vine:  
 But yet your mother's jealous temperament—  
 Let not your prudence, dearest, drowse, or prove  
 The Danaïd of a leaky vase, for fear  
 This whole foundation ruin, and I lose  
 My honor, these their lives.

*Melissa*. Ah! fear me not; I would not tell,  
 No, not for all Aspasia's cleverness;  
 No, not to answer, madam, all those hard things  
 That Sheba came to ask of Solomon.

*Lady Psyche*. Be it so.  
 [*To the others.*] Go; we have been too long  
 Together: keep your hoods about the face;  
 They do so that affect abstraction here.  
 Speak little; mix not with the rest; and hold  
 Your promise: all, I trust, may yet be well.

[*Exeunt Prince, Florian, and Cyril.*]



SCENE IV.—*A Woodland Scene.*

*The PRINCE and PRINCESS are seated on a rustic bench.*

*The pupils are strolling to and fro.*

*Princess.* O friend, we trust that you esteem'd us  
not

Too harsh to your companion yestermorn;  
Unwillingly we spake.

*Prince.* No—not to her,  
But to one of whom we spake  
Your Highness might have seem'd the thing you say.

*Princess.* Again? Are you ambassadresses  
From him to me? We give you, being strange,  
A license: speak, and let the topic die.

*Prince* [*stammering*]. I know him well—and  
hoped—  
Our king expects—was there no precontract?  
There is no truer-hearted—ah, you seem  
All he prefigured, and he could not see  
The bird of passage flying south, but long'd  
To follow: surely, if your Highness keep  
Your purport, you will shock him ev'n to death,  
Or baser courses, children of despair.

*Princess.* Poor boy, can he not read—no books?  
Quoit, tennis, ball—no games? nor deals in that  
Which men delight in, martial exercise?  
To nurse a blind ideal like a girl,  
Methinks he seems no better than a girl,  
As girls were once, as we ourself have been:  
We had our dreams; perhaps he mixt with them:  
We touch on our dead self, nor shun to do it,  
Being other—since we learnt our meaning here,

To lift the woman's fall'n divinity  
 Upon an even pedestal with man.  
 And as to precontracts, we move, my friend,  
 At no man's beck.

*Prince.* You grant me license; might I use it?  
                   think;

Ere half be done perchance your life may fail.  
 Might I dread that you,  
 With only Fame for spouse and your great deeds  
 For issue, yet may live in vain, and miss,  
 Meanwhile, what every woman counts her due,—  
 Love, children, happiness?

*Princess.* Peace, you young savage of the Northern  
                   wild!

What! tho' your Prince's love were like a god's,  
 Have we not made ourself the sacrifice?  
 You are bold indeed: we are not talk'd to thus:  
 Yet will we say for children, would they grew  
 Like field-flowers everywhere! we like them well:  
 But children die; and let me tell you, girl,  
 Howe'er you babble, great deeds cannot die.  
 They with the sun and moon renew their light  
 Forever, blessing those that look on them.  
 Children—that men may pluck them from our  
                   hearts,  
 Kill us with pity, break us with ourselves—  
 O—children—there is nothing upon earth  
 More miserable than she that has a son  
 And sees him err.  
 No doubt we seem a kind of monster to you;  
 We are used to that: for women, up till this  
 Cramp'd under worse than South-sea-isle taboo,

Know not, cannot guess

How much their welfare is a passion to us.

[*The Princess rises.*

There sinks the nebulous star we call the Sun,

If that hypothesis of theirs be sound.

[*Recites.*

The splendor falls on castle-walls

And snowy summits old in story ;

The long light shakes across the lakes,

And the wild cataract leaps in glory.

Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying ;

Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,

And thinner, clearer, farther going !

O sweet and far from cliff and scar,

The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !

Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying ;

Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,

They faint on hill or field or river :

Our echoes roll from soul to soul,

And grow forever and forever.

Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying ;

And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

[*The pupils have been gradually coming nearer,  
and are now grouped about. The Princess  
resumes her seat.*

*Princess.* Let some one sing to us.

Lightlier move the minutes fledged with music.

[*Lady Psyche, or one of the pupils, sings.*

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean ;

Tears from the depth of some divine despair

Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,

In looking on the happy autumn-fields,  
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail  
That brings our friends up from the underworld,  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the verge;  
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns  
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds  
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;  
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd  
On lips that are for others; deep as love,  
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;  
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

*Princess.* If indeed there haunt  
About the moulder'd lodges of the Past  
So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to men,  
Well needs it we should cram our ears with wool  
And so pace by: but thine are fancies hatch'd  
In silken-folded idleness; nor is it  
Wiser to weep a true occasion lost,  
But trim our sails, and let old by-gones be.

[*To the Prince.*

Know you no song of your own land?  
Not such as moans about the retrospect,  
But deals with the other distance and the hues  
Of promise; not a death's-head at the wine.

[*The Prince sings, trying to ape a  
maidenlike treble.*

O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying South,  
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,  
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,  
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,  
And dark and true and tender is the North.

O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow, and light  
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,  
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

O were I thou that she might take me in,  
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart  
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,  
Delaying as the tender ash delays  
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?

O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown :  
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,  
But in the North long since my nest is made.

O tell her, brief is life, but love is long,  
And brief the sun of summer in the North,  
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,  
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her mine,  
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.

*Princess.* A mere love-poem! O for such, my friend,  
We hold them slight : they mind us of the time  
When we made bricks in Egypt. Knaves are men,  
That lute and flute fantastic tenderness.  
Poor soul! I had a maid of honor once ;

She wept her true eyes blind for such a one,  
 A rogue of canzonets and serenades.  
 I loved her. Peace be with her. She is dead.  
 So they blaspheme the muse! But great is song  
 Used to great ends.  
 Love, is it? Would this same mock-love, and this  
 Mock-Hymen were laid up like winter bats,  
 Till all men grew to rate us at our worth;  
 Not vassals to be beat, nor petty babes  
 To be dandled, no, but living wills, and sphered  
 Whole in ourselves and owed to none. Enough!  
 But now to leaven play with profit, you,  
 [*To Cyril.*] Know you no song, the true growth of  
                   your soil,  
 That gives the manners of your countrywomen?  
[*Cyril sings.*

The man in the moon drinks claret,  
 Eats powdered beef, turnip and carrot;  
 But a cup of old Malaga sack  
 Will fire the bush at his back.\*

[*This song, of course, betrays Cyril's sex, and  
 creates consternation among the listeners.*]

SCENE V.—*The hall. The PRINCESS is surrounded  
 by her maidens. MELISSA, weeping, kneels at her  
 feet. The PRINCE and FLORIAN stand near by.  
 LADY BLANCHE is in a violent passion.*

*Lady Blanche.* It was not thus, O Princess, in  
                   old days:  
 You prized my counsel, lived upon my lips.

\* Taken from a song in "Percy's Reliques."

I loved you like this kneeler, and you me,  
Your second mother : those were gracious times.  
Then came your new friend : you began to change,—  
I saw it and grieved,—to slacken and to cool ;  
Till, taken with her seeming openness,  
You turn'd your warmer currents all to her,  
To me you froze : this was my need for all.  
Yet I bore up in part from ancient love,  
And partly that I hoped to win you back,  
And partly conscious of my own deserts,  
And partly that you were my civil head,  
And chiefly you were born for something great,  
In which I might your fellow-worker be,  
When time should serve ; and thus a noble scheme  
Grew up from seed we two long since had sown.  
We took this palace ; but even from the first  
You stood in your own light and darken'd mine.  
What student came but that you planed her path  
To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise,  
A foreigner, and I your countrywoman,—  
I your old friend and tried, she new in all ?  
Then came these wolves : *they* knew her : *they* en-  
dured,  
Long closeted with her the yestermorn,  
To tell her what they were, and she to hear :  
And me none told.  
Last night their mask was patent, and my foot  
Was to you : but I thought again : I fear'd  
To meet a cold " We thank you, we shall hear of it  
From Lady Psyche."  
I spoke not then at first, but watch'd them well,  
Saw that they kept apart, no mischief done ;

And yet this day (tho' you should hate me for it)  
 I came to tell you; found that you had gone,  
 Ridd'n to the hills, she likewise: now, I thought,  
 That surely she will speak; if not, then I.  
 Did she? These monsters blazon'd what they were  
 According to the coarseness of their kind,  
 For thus I hear; and known at last (my work),  
 And full of cowardice and guilty shame,  
 I grant in her some sense of shame, she flies;  
 And I remain on whom to wreak your rage.  
 I, that have lent my life to build up yours;  
 I, that have wasted here health, wealth, and time,  
 And talents, I—you know it—I will not boast:  
 Dismiss me, and I prophesy your plan,  
 Divorced from my experience, will be chaff  
 For every gust of chance, and men will say  
 We did not know the real light, but chased  
 The wisp that flickers where no foot can tread.

*Princess [coldly].* Good. Your oath is broken:  
 We dismiss you: go.

*Lady Blanche.*             The plan was mine.  
 I built the nest to hatch the cuckoo.

[*To Melissa.*] Rise!

[*She drags Melissa from the place.*

[*A messenger enters hastily and hands to the Princess  
 two letters; these the Princess reads, then hands them  
 to the Prince.*

*Princess [in a passion].* Read!

[*Prince reads Gama's letter.*

*Prince.* "Fair daughter, when we sent the Prince  
 your way

We knew not your ungracious laws, which learnt,



We, conscious of what temper you are built,  
Came all in haste to hinder wrong, but fell  
Into his father's hands, who has this night,  
You lying close upon his territory,  
Slipt round and in the dark invested you,  
And here he keeps me hostage for his son."

[*He then reads his father's letter.*

"You have our son; touch not a hair of his head:  
Render him up unscathed: give him your hand:  
Cleave to your contract: tho' indeed we hear  
You hold the woman is the better man;  
A rampant heresy, such as if it spread  
Would make all women kick against their lords  
Thro' all the world, and which might well deserve  
That we this night should pluck your palace down;  
And we will do it, unless you send us back  
Our son, on the instant, whole."

[*The Prince turns to Ida.*

*Prince.* O not to pry and peer on your reserve,  
But led by golden wishes, and a hope  
The child of regal compact, did I break  
Your precinct; not a scorner of your sex  
But venerator, zealous it should be  
All that it might be:  
A man I came to see you.  
I cannot cease to follow you, as they say  
The seal does music; who desire you more  
Than growing boys their manhood; dying lips,  
With many thousand matters left to do,  
The breath of life; O more than poor men wealth,  
Than sick men health—yours, yours, not mine—but  
half

Without you ; with you, whole ; and of those halves  
 You worthiest. I hold  
 That it becomes no man to nurse despair,  
 But in the teeth of clench'd antagonisms  
 To follow up the worthiest till he die.  
 Yet that I came not all unauthorized  
 Behold your father's letter.

*[Kneels and hands the letter, which the Princess  
 dashes unopened at her feet.]*

*Princess.* You have done well and like a gentleman,  
 And like a prince : you have our thanks for all :  
 And you look well, too, in your woman's dress.  
 Well have you done and like a gentleman.  
*I wed with thee ! I bound by precontract*  
 Your bride, your bondslave ! not tho' all the gold  
 That veins the world were pack'd to make your crown,  
 And every spoken tongue should lord you. Sir,  
 Your falsehood and yourself are hateful to us :  
 I trample on your offers and on you.  
 Begone : we will not look upon you more.

*[Exeunt Prince and Florian.]*

[The Princess persists in her refusal to wed the Prince, and as a result of this breach of contract a battle ensues between the followers of the hostile monarchs. The Prince is wounded in the fight and carried from the field. The Princess, giving way to the hidden tenderness of her nature, opens the college to all the wounded, and takes upon herself the care of the Prince].

*[Let this song be sung behind the scenes.]*

Home they brought her warrior dead ;  
 She nor swoon'd, nor uttered cry :

All her maidens, watching, said,  
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,  
Call'd him worthy to be loved,  
Truest friend and noblest foe ;  
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,  
Lightly to the warrior stept,  
Took the face-cloth from the face ;  
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,  
Set his child upon her knee,—  
Like summer tempest came her tears,—  
"Sweet, my child, I live for thee."

*[If desired, the Princess may recite the following.]*

Our enemies have fallen, have fallen : the seed,  
The little seed they laugh'd at in the dark,  
Has risen and cleft the soil, and grown a bulk  
Of spanless girth, that lays on every side  
A thousand arms and rushes to the sun.

Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n : they came ;  
The leaves were wet with women's tears : they heard  
A noise of songs they would not understand.  
They marked it with the red cross to the fall,  
And would have strown it, and are fall'n themselves.

Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n : they came,  
The woodmen with their axes : lo, the tree !  
But we will make it fagots for the hearth,  
And shape it plank and beam for roof and floor,  
And boats and bridges for the use of men.

Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n : they struck ;  
With their own blows they hurt themselves, nor knew  
There dwelt an iron nature in the grain.

The glittering axe was broken in their arms.  
 Their arms were shatter'd to the shoulder-blade.

Our enemies have fall'n, but this shall grow  
 A night of Summer from the heat, a breadth  
 Of Autumn, dropping fruits of power; and rolled  
 With music in the growing breeze of Time,  
 The tops shall strike from star to star, the fangs  
 Shall move the stony bases of the world.

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SCENE VI.—*The wounded PRINCE lies sleeping. The PRINCESS attends him. As the night wears slowly on she takes up a volume of poems and reads.*

*Princess.* As thro' the land at eve we went,  
           And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,  
 We fell out, my wife and I,  
 O we fell out, I know not why,  
           And kissed again with tears!  
 And blessings on the falling out  
           That all the more endears,  
 When we fall out with those we love  
           And kiss again with tears!  
 For when we came where lies the child  
           We lost in other years,  
 There above the little grave,  
 O there above the little grave,  
           We kissed again with tears!

[*The Prince half rouses from his sleep.*

*Prince.* If you be, what I think you, some sweet  
           dream,  
 I would but ask you to fulfil yourself;  
 But if you be that Ida whom I knew,  
 I ask you nothing: only, if a dream,

Sweet dream, be perfect. I shall die to-night.  
Stoop down and seem to kiss me ere I die.

[*The Princess kisses him, then passes quickly from the room. Returning and finding the Prince asleep she takes up her book and reads again.*]

*Princess.* Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white;  
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;  
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font:  
The fire-fly wakens: waken thou with me.

Now droops the milk-white peacock like a ghost,  
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the Earth all Danaë to the stars,  
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves  
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,  
And slips into the bosom of the lake;  
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip  
Into my bosom and be lost in me.

*Prince [who is now awake].* Come close beside me.

[*The Princess seats herself by the couch.*]

Henceforth thou hast a helper, me, that know  
The woman's cause is man's: they rise or sink  
Together, dwarf'd or godlike, bond or free;

She shares with man

His nights, his days, moves with him to one goal.

Work no more alone!

Woman is not undeveloped man,

But diverse: could we make her as the man,

Sweet Love were slain: his dearest bond is this,

Not like to like, but like in difference.  
 Yet in the long years liker must they grow;  
 The man be more of woman, she of man;  
 He gain in sweetness and in moral height,  
 She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,  
 Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind;  
 Till at the last she set herself to man,  
 Like perfect music unto noble words.  
 And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time,  
 Sit side by side, full-summ'd in all their powers,  
 Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,  
 Self-reverent each and reverencing each,  
 Distinct in individualities,  
 But like each other, ev'n as those who love.  
 Then comes the statelier Eden back to men;  
 Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and  
                   calm;  
 Then springs the crowning race of humankind.  
 May these things be!

*Princess* [*sighing*]. I fear they will not.

*Prince*. Dear, but let us type them now  
 In our own lives, and this proud watchword rest  
 Of equal; seeing either sex alone  
 Is half itself, and in true marriage lies  
 Nor equal, nor unequal: each fulfils  
 Defect in each, and always thought in thought,  
 Purpose in purpose, will in will they grow,  
 The single pure and perfect animal,  
 The two-cell'd heart beating, with one full stroke,  
 Life.

*Princess*. A dream that once was mine.  
 What woman taught you this?

*Prince.* There was one thro' whom I loved, one  
Not learned, save in gracious household ways;  
Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants;  
No angel, but a dearer being, all dipt  
In angel instincts, breathing Paradise.

Happy he  
With such a mother! faith in womankind  
Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high  
Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and fall,  
He shall not blind his soul with clay.

*Princess.* But I, so all unlike—  
This mother is your model.  
Prince, you cannot love me.

*Prince.* Thee, ere seen, I loved, and loved thee  
seen.

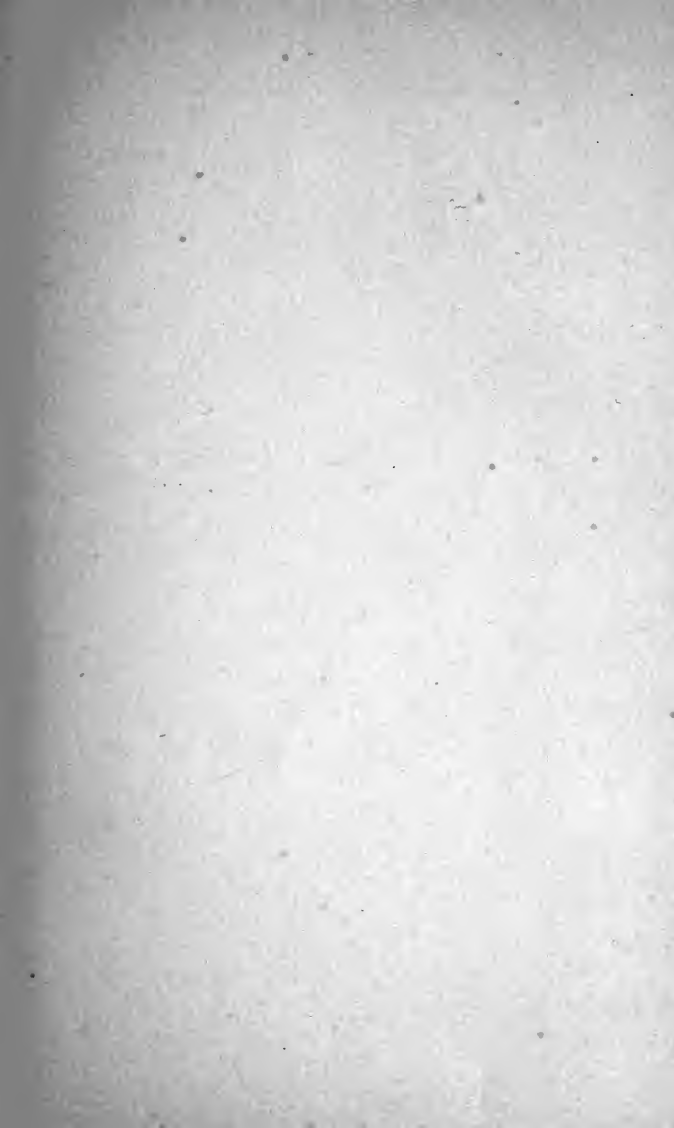
O we will walk this world,  
Yoked in all exercise of noble end,  
And so thro' those dark gates across the wild  
That no man knows! Indeed, I love thee. Come,  
Yield thyself up: my hopes and thine are one:  
Accomplish thou my manhood and thyself;  
Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust to me.

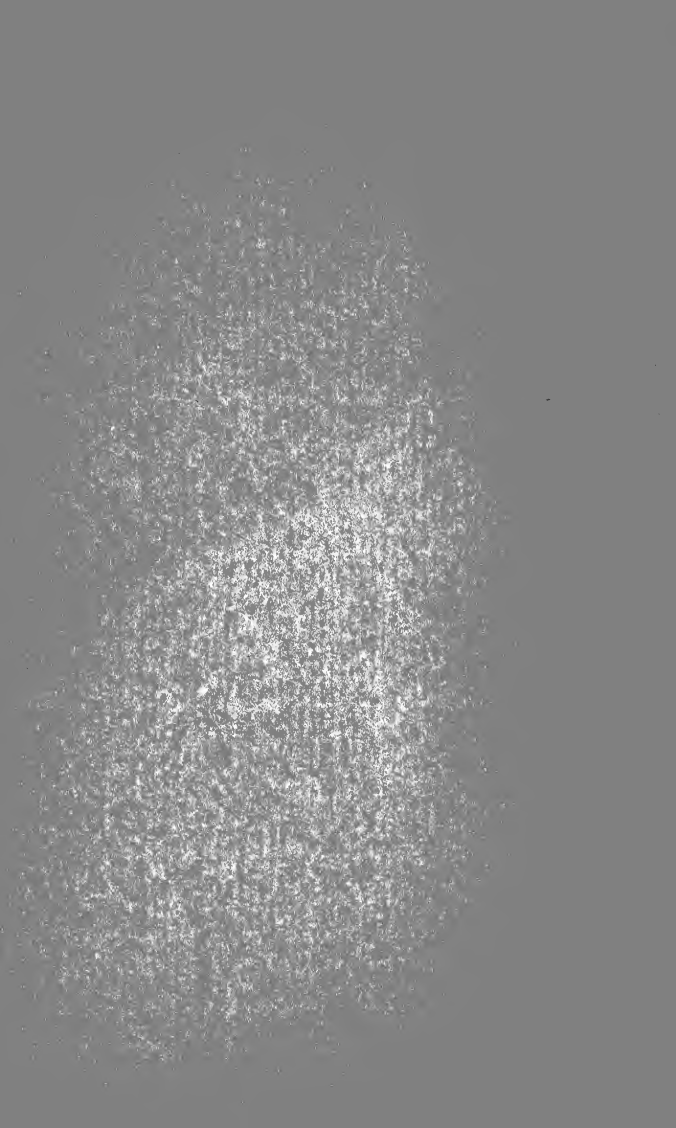
*Princess.* Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are seal'd.  
I strove against the stream and all in vain:  
Let the great river take me to the main.  
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;  
Ask me no more.

THE END.











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